TL 4698

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 4, 1999

His Excellency Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations
His Excellency Ali Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia
His Excellency Jaime Gama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal

Dear Sirs:

We are writing today to express our serious concern about continued Indonesian military-backed paramilitary violence despite the UN-sponsored agreement that is scheduled to be finalized on May 5. We also would like to inform you that we are planning this week to introduce a Resolution in the U.S. Senate that will seek to withhold further U.S. military equipment and services to the Indonesian Government and military prior to the August 8 ballot, unless specific important steps are taken.

Over the last three weeks paramilitary units in East Timor have attacked and massacred dozens of civilians in the villages of Liquica and Suai, and in East Timor's capital, Dili. These groups are believed to be targeting members of the resistance, reconciliation leaders, NGO representatives and others. Nobel Peace Laureate Bishop Carlos Belo has issued an urgent plea for help, as paramilitaries now threaten to turn their deadly campaign on Catholic bishops, priests and nuns. There is also a report that eleven anti-independence militia members were recently tortured and killed.

Our Resolution states that the U.S. Government should not transfer military equipment and services prior to the August 8th ballot unless the Indonesian Government and military take certain important steps. The Indonesian Government should grant immediate and full access to East Timor by international human rights monitors, humanitarian organizations and the press; should disarm and disband paramilitary groups; and should bring to justice those responsible for recent atrocities. These steps need to be taken because they are necessary to ensure a stable and secure environment for a free and fair vote.

We respectfully ask that your attention be directed to these concerns as quickly and comprehensively as possible. We look forward to the results of your agreement on Wednesday, and to your response.

Sincerely,

Russell Feingold

RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD
United States Senator

Patrick Leahy

PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator